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ABSTRACT

In this speech, the author suggests that the success of public schools depends heavily on commitment to and large-scale agreement on educational goals. He examines the difficulty in creating rational programs to carry out specific behavioral goals and the more remote ends usually stated for educational systems. The author then discusses the difficulty in getting goals formulated on an ideological base through the political structure, the degree of centralization, and the problem of who should make the decisions regarding an educational program. The roles of parents, children, and educators in the educational planning process are discussed. (Author/DN)

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PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT: IDENTIFICATION AND FORMULATION OF DESIRABLE EDUCATIONAL GOALS

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INTRODUCTION: CONTEXT AND CAVEATS

This conference is focused on issues, problems and processes pertaining to the development of educational programs. Its planners regard the development of educational programs as goal-oriented, improvable activity. Since motivation for the conference arises, in part, out of anticipated increased decentralization of authority and responsibility, presumably the speakers are to cast some light on what this means for various actors in the process. My specific responsibility is to the identification and formulation of desirable educational goals.

The context of or setting for my remarks is the organized, public system of elementary and secondary schooling, although I make some passing reference to free schools and other alternative educational settings. However, much of what I have to say applies to educational institutions generally, especially in developed countries such as Canada and the United States. Also, most of my remarks grow out of the assumption that the educational program constitutes the whole of what students encounter in these institutions, not merely the intended subject-matter of social studies, science, language arts, humanities and fine arts curricula.

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Given this context, it is essential to remember that programs already exist and constitute part of the phenomenological reality to be encountered in any new planning activity. The prime quality, presumably, of program development thought of as goal-oriented is that it is activated by reason. But we cannot and must not assume that what new programs are designed to replace is activated by something other than reason. Quite the contrary; what exists already is rational in that is was designed, carefully or carelessly, to enable students to understand the world about them and to relate such knowledge to the attainment of their human ends. Perhaps even more important to goal-oriented program planners is that many of those responsible for financing, administering, and especially teaching what exists regard their present programs as eminently rational--frequently more rational than any other alternative suggested to them. Further, what exists is fortified by the reluctance of most persons involved with it to engage in more than mild changes.

There are, in the above, at least three caveats to program planners, all three of which have been ignored to considerable degree by educational innovators and curriculum makers, world-wide: (1) there already are meals on the educational tables; (2) those in the kitchen planned them with diets and menus in mind; and (3) those who serve the meals in the dining halls have grown accustomed to their routine. The diets may be nutritionally inadequate but this is quite another issue to which we shall soon turn. We should not assume, either, that those who partake of the food eagerly await an alternative diet, nor that they would progress markedly differently under its influence. And, certainly, how consumers feel about their educational food has

had, to date, little influence on the menus. In the educational market place, the consumers are not the buyers.

THE SOURCES OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Goals arise out of realization that there is a gap between some existing condition and an alternative condition reflecting interest. But this observation only helps to obscure complexities. For example, does this realization of a gap stem from some other goal? A mayor wishes to put in roads where there is none now--to change a condition of roadlessness to a condition of roads--and so his goal becomes to build roads. But his real goal is to become governor or prime minister and so building roads is not a goal at all but a means. And yet, to build roads, ostensibly, is indeed a goal. Thus, we get into an infinite regression: the source of a goal is a goal and the means to a goal is a goal.[1]

Perhaps it is only an exercise in semantics to suggest, then, that goals arise out of interests but I find this notion rather useful here. Macdonald puts it this way, in speaking of curriculum: "My basic proposition about curriculum is that at all levels . . . . the basic phenomenon which underlies all activity is the existence of human interest which precedes and channels the activity of curriculum thinking."[2] Some might wish to substitute the word "value" for "interest." Human interest of some kind intrudes wherever an educational decision is made.

At any rate, the mayor is interested in becoming governor and so he activates a number of goal-oriented activities. But by the time the elections roll around, there is a financial recession, there has been a scandal in regard to contracts, and some of the new

roads lead to housing developments that did not develop. The mayor's road-building activity is a liability he would love to bury.

Educational program development is plagued with such problems. No matter how precise our goals, we know relatively little as to which goals best sustain our interest in producing citizens who possess the virtues of compassion, honesty, happiness, good workmanship, creativity and the like. As Pace points out, there is little relationship between success in schools as measured by marks and any of these virtues,[3] most of which are imbedded in national or state aims for education. Further, we are less certain as to the reasons for this discrepancy than the mayor was with respect to the shortcomings in his campaign. Were our sub-goals unrelated behaviorally or substantively to the larger ones or did we simply bungle their attainment out of ignorance, ineptness or sloth? To an old cliché, "having lost sight of our goals, we redoubled our efforts to attain them," we might add, "having lost sight of our goals, we redoubled our efforts to refine them."

Lest I appear to chant too despairing a refrain, let me return to the deceptively simple notion of goals emanating from awareness of gaps coupled with desire to close them. Gaps exist because of disparities between interests and perceptions of what exists. Our problem as cizitens in a democratic society is, on one hand, to bring forward alternative interests and choose among those capable of being supported by the best reasons and, on the other, to make the best possible appraisals of what exists. The necessary limitations to this paper prevent me from going into the staggering array of complexities surrounding these two

tasks and so I shall treat them simply as difficult but feasible, in the same way that putting men on the moon was both of these--but easier.

In regard to the first, that of choosing among alternative interests, I am placing the democratic attribute of best use of intelligence above the democratic attribute of participatory decision-making. We want to keep our society open to alternatives but not all alternatives are equally good. Some alternatives are more self-serving, short-sighted and devoid of reason than others. Voting is a poor way to decide the properties of matter or the speed of sound. In effect, what is wanted are alternatives well supported by relevant knowledge or reasons.

The second task is somewhat easier but exceedingly difficult also, nonetheless. It is that of determining existential conditions or, in the realm of relevant knowledge, common perceptions. The latter sometimes is referred to as conventional wisdom.

These tasks should be carried on continuously, as they are in economic and some other realms of human welfare. They are carried on only sporadically in the field of education, although some countries have created or are now creating curriculum development or policy centers for this purpose.

We do not yet have goals, however, after engaging in these tasks. Goals grow out of comparing selected alternatives with corresponding existential conditions, appraising the nature of the gaps and then determining what is required to close them. The result is relatively puerile statements of human possibilities. But when joined with commitment, they become goals to be promoted or achieved. The chances of their being attained are enhanced, some claim, by the precise specification of what they entail.

Not all goals are educational ones. Many pertain to immediate physical needs and are best achieved through non-educational means. In his message to Congress early in 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson said that the careful examination of any problem reveals education to be at the heart of it. He was, I think, both right and wrong, depending on the time perspective. If the problem is, for example, the existence of slums or unemployment, human engineering (which applies the fruits of education) is likely to be the short-term answer and education the long-term. Therefore, in problems of this kind, goals of human engineering should take precedence initially over goals of education. Goals for education should result from carefully determining that educational programs, processes and institutions are, indeed, relevant to closing the gap between what appears to exist and the perception of some more "ideal" alternative. When this is so, we have an education gap.

At its dynamic best, the education gap is the distance between man's most noble visions of what he might become and the conventional wisdom and motivates the thoughts, decisions and daily activities of a large segment of the people. Out of the analysis of this gap have emerged educational goals pertaining to intellectual development, enculturation, interpersonal relations, personal autonomy, citizenship, creativity, esthetic perception, sturdy self-concepts, emotional and physical well-being, and moral and ethical character. Educational institutions and practices presumably take their cues from such goals, changing their emphases periodically with shifting views of the education gap.

We begin to see that substituting reason for emotion in the setting of educational goals carries us into profound philosophical, sociological and anthropological

inquiry. The effort to attain goals, in turn, carries us into political, economic and psychological realms as well as into strategies and the logistics of program implementation and change. The identification and formulation of desirable educational goals embraces all of these.

The function of educational program development, presumably, is to move the level of conventional wisdom toward new and better levels of funded knowledge, tested skills and desirable attitudes. There are ideological problems of determining the nature of the education gap and what should be done about it. There are political problems of establishing sets of possible choices over competing alternatives--and that means not merely establishing the virtue of one over another but of placing certain choices within significant decision-making structures (such as, for example, those of state or provincial legislators). And there are technical/social problems of effecting changes or improving the discharge of existing program commitments.

Although those writing the scenarios for and acting in the dramas of program development may confine themselves to only one of these major sets of problems--the ideological or the political or the technical/social--no state or nation will advance far in closing the education gap unless all three are embraced in a comprehensive planning process. Because this process is so fully human, it will not be fully rational. But at least the component parts should be conducted with some awareness of the whole. In education, program planners tend to be myopic, eschewing basic value questions as theoretic or impractical and ignoring the fact that both ideas and programs must find their way through the civil/political system to make a difference.

Juxtaposition of ideological, practical and technical/social considerations in a comprehensive program-planning process parallels, to some extent, I think, what Schwab calls the practical in contrast to the theoretic:

> The method of the practical . . . is, then, not at all a linear affair proceeding step-by-step, but rather a complex, fluid trans-actional discipline aimed at identification of the desirable and at either attainment of the desired or at alteration of desires.[4]

I am concerned here with the practical, as Schwab defines it, and with the three kinds of problems and processes I have chosen to place within this frame. Before proceeding, however, I should make explicit what may be obscure. The formulation of major goals from the identification of an education gap as described does not end the matter of identifying educational goals. Far from it. The possibility and, indeed, probability of new goals emerging open up at each decision-making point and with each actor in the program-planning process. The frequency with which new interest intrude and their potency depend in part on the extent of centralization of authority and decen-tralization of responsibility. A highly centralized system of education tends to increase the difficulty--and sometimes even the personal risk--of intruding new interests. But a highly decentralized one complicates the problem of making more than parochial changes.

THE IDEOLOGICAL IN PROGRAM PLANNING

There is a speculative realm of program planning which sometimes is so generally engaged in as to warrant recognition as a national sport. Participants disagree as to what is wrong with society, where the society should be heading and what educational programs should be doing to close the gap. Solutions vary with the times and frequently are couched in slogans, in recent years running the gamut from teach the whole child, to life-adjustment education, to teach the 3 R's, to teach the structure of the disciplines, to integrate the subjects, to

humanize the curriculum, to career education. All of these imply goals for educational programs. All tend to get some temporary visibility, often more for their rhetoric than their substance.

There are, of course, less elegantly stated ideologies: Let the kids learn that life is tough; learning should hurt. Or, society is going soft; no better place than school for teaching discipline. Or, society exists for the individual; let the kids do their thing. These notions, too, imply educational goals.

But such speculation and gratuitous advice do little to enlighten ongoing processes of program planning for educational institutions. There is, however, an embryonic field or discipline of program planning which seeks to set some guidelines or ground rules so as to raise casual speculation to systematic inquiry. Tyler and Klein on criteria for instructional materials,[5] Bloom on taxonomical analysis of educational objectives,[6] Popham and Baker on clarification of instructional objectives,[7] Scriven on formative and summative evaluation,[8] Goodlad on authority and responsibility in curriculum decision-making,[9] and Tyler on a rationale for curriculum planning[10] get no extra votes in determining what interests should prevail in the setting of educational goals. But what they have to say about program development frequently does modify what goes on in decision-making processes by providing alternatives seen as superior to the conventional wisdom. Conceivably, their impact would be greater were they to testify before Congressional Committees, as indeed most of them have (and as Professor Popham did so effectively recently in regard to criterion-referenced tests versus norm-based tests--and I use the word "effectively" here in reference to his substantive or ideological effectiveness, since his political effectiveness at this point in time is difficult to judge.)

But now we are in danger of leaving the ideological and straying into the political realm of the practical. While recognizing that ideas, to make a practical difference, must find their way through the political structure, our concern with improving the ideological base of the practical is with relevance and validity. Relevance takes us to the question of whether the idea pertains to closing the education gap. If the problem is joblessness, we probably have an engineering gap, at least in the present, and career education is an irrelevant solution. But if the problem is inability to read, a literacy program is relevant.

With relevance determined, the problem now becomes one of selecting among competing alternatives. Which is best, with validity defined as potential for closing the gap between one level of literacy and a higher one? In regard to almost all such questions, there is a short history of systematic inquiry. Seldom are its cumulative results definitive but there is enough knowledge in some areas to advance the level of intelligence in decision-making. It is important to look to this knowledge, just as it is exceedingly important to provide more resources, mount more sustained research programs and recruit better people for the pursuit of such knowledge.

In regard to validity of ideological alternatives, there is rarely a "best"; rather, there are alternative "goods." Rarely are we concerned about a single educational goal, existing out of relation to others. The cost of proceeding diligently with one goal may be too great. For example, I discovered as a young elementary-school teacher that my success in motivating certain goals of achievement with 10-year-olds resulted in an upsurge of dangerously competitive behavior and a rash of cheating.

The problem of validity regarding educational ends and means is complicated further by the fact that means frequently are value-loaded quite apart from their presumed logical relationship to a given end. That is, such proposals as open classrooms frequently are motivated by interest in social interaction and life-style rather than in the efficient attainment of prescribed objectives. A society open to educational alternatives runs the risk or enhances the opportunity, depending on one's viewpoint, for introducing new goals along with new means.

The best solution for enhancing the ideological base for program development in a democratic society has, I think, at least three components. The first is that of enhancing the theoretic. The second is the creation of policy centers. The third is the encouragement of independent program development activity quite apart from the formal political structure. While it is appropriate for all three to proceed in an integrated whole, in a single organizational and administrative structure, it is dangerous to have only one such center. Unfortunately, it requires a certain affluence to afford the luxury of alternatives and diversity--or at least, a measure of affluence seems to help. Space permits only a few sentences about each of these.

The theoretic is the natural but not exclusive domain of universities where it is rightfully engaged in for its own sake. It is a matter of selecting the proper questions and pursuing them with complete independence. It is conclusion-oriented inquiry in contrast to decision-oriented.[11] Tyler,[12] Schwab,[13] Herrick,[14] Taba[15] and many others have posed some of the questions. But we are still short of an agreed-upon set of commonplaces regarding program development or curriculum

as a field of study, in the sense that learning theorists explore commonplaces such as motivation, transfer of training, reinforcement and the like. Recognizing the significance of the practical, in Schwab's terms, is not to deny the importance of the theoretic. In fact, denying the theoretic ultimately castrates the practical.

The concept of educational policy centers is new or still foreign to most states or nations. In the United States, the Syracuse University Research Center has engaged in systematic study of program-related policy questions in the field of education, some of its funds coming from government sources. The Research Division of the Kettering Foundation's Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc. (|I|D|E|A|), is a non-university-based agency engaged in studies to provide a research base for policy decisions. The report of the Commission on Educational Planning of Alberta is a first-rate example of what can emerge from policy planning.[16] The conduct of such work by a private organization, as appears now to be the case in Alberta, is a viable alternative, especially if there can be several firms and sources of financial support. Policy study centers seek not only to define education gaps but also to analyze them for clues to change and to pose recommendations and strategies for carrying out recommendations. They tend not to engage in theoretic work for its own sake but to enlighten the practical.

The curriculum centers rapidly emerging in developing countries offer promise for both assisting in the formulation of national policy and developing materials-based programs. Most of them engage seriously in evaluation. They present both the strengths and weaknesses of being closely attached to or divisions of the respective ministries of education and culture and the limitation, commonly, of standing alone

as the developers of single versions of curricula. By contrast, the highly independent curriculum projects producing such programs as SMSG, PSSC, SCIS BSCS, CBA and the like in the United States provided a considerable range of alternatives, especially when versions or segments were included in the products of private publishing companies.[17] Just as the government-linked centers have difficulties getting their products through the classroom door,[18] these independent projects were confronted with this problem and the additional one of gaining sufficient access to the political structure to receive authorization even to knock on classroom doors. Many of them ultimately turned over this problem to the more experienced publishing houses so that their ideological curricular formulations might be carried more effectively through the political structure. In the process, of course, these formulations lost much of their ideology.

THE POLITICAL IN PROGRAM PLANNING

The immediately preceding discussion reveals that identifying the desirable in program goals ultimately brings us to the problems of attaining them, so long as we continue to concern ourselves with the practical in contrast to the theoretic. And this inevitably brings us to the political structure through which goals or full-blown ideological programs must pass or within which goals and programs arise. It is a decision-making structure in which, hopefully, reason will make some progress in the face of emotion.

A first question for program development now becomes: "Who should make what decisions?" But, in line with earlier discussion of existential realities and goals arising out of a gap, it would be well to find out something about the extant decision-making process. Elsewhere, I have conceptualized three decision-making

levels according to the actors and, to lesser degree, the nature of the decisions.[19] These levels I have labelled societal, institutional and instructional, somewhat following Parsons' analysis of social systems.[20] Space limitations prevent me from going into any great detail here.

Societal decisions are those made for classes of learners, such as adolescents, by some controlling agency, such as a legislator or school board, usually at a level in the structure remote from those for whom the decisions are intended. Institutional decisions are those made for specific students now in the programs, or soon to be enrolled, by those directly responsible for the education of these students. Instructional decisions are those bringing intended learnings to specific students who are then required to make some sort of adaptation to them.

All three types can be simulated ideologically--that is, outside of the political structure--and this is an appropriate activity for theorists. In free schools, the levels tend to be collapsed, and this is a very attractive feature for free spirits wishing to escape the bureaucracy of public education. But they soon find that they cannot escape the decisions. The burdens and complexities of dealing with them frequently douse the spirits of even the most doughty and free-spirited.

Experience in using this three-level analysis of reality shows that it holds up in developing as well as developed countries. However, this experience, together with Griffin's study[21] and the studies my colleagues and I have conducted regarding educational change,[22] suggest that the least active of three levels is the

institutional. Few schools have goals or thought-through programs to which they are committed; few schools engage seriously in translating state, provincial, or national educational aims into statements of local relevance. Perhaps this is because the task is so difficult and time-consuming, as McClure's study reveals.[23] At the same time, school staffs engaging in it seriously and in sustained fashion extoll the values of the process[24] and frequently insist on the right to engage in it.

Recent stress on local accountability and some movement toward decentralization of decision-making authority may be changing this vacuum in institution-based goal-setting but there is as yet little evidence to suggest that schools, "free" or not, are playing a significant role in determining educational goals for or with the students enrolled. I am not necessarily suggesting that local schools or even school systems are the proper setting for the initial formulation of goals. But, given the generality of state or national aims, when they are stated at all, I am suggesting that there is a need to translate societal goals into operational, institutional ones and to rearrange priorities or even to choose among alternatives in the light of community and pupil needs and realities. Perhaps, in so doing, the fragile link between what teachers do and our idealized ends for education and schooling would be strengthened.

This trend in my analysis turns me back to the troublesome question of who should make what decisions. The situation as it now exists is chaotic. Griffin had little difficulty getting satisfactory agreement among independent judges regarding decisions thought to be appropriate for a societal body such as legislators, as discrete from those considered appropriate for teachers at the

instructional level.[25] But Hill's study of legislators revealed both their readiness to intrude into the instructional process and their general ignorance of past legislation currently applying to the identical realms of decision-making.[26] Some saw little need to be informed and few recognized the implicit issue of authority and responsibility and its importance.

I have done little more here than to identify a problem of grave importance in program development and particularly in the identification and formulation of educational goals. The determination of decision-making roles within the political structure governing education probably is the most urgent problem now facing us in seeking to infuse the practical with reason. I conclude this topic by suggesting: (1) that who should make a decision bears a relationship to who has the data (e.g., teachers should work with children in setting specific reading goals for individuals and should not be handicapped by restraining regulations in the education code); (2) that there needs to be much more stress on school-by-school planning; (3) that the planning at levels getting increasingly close to specific students must use as one data-source the corresponding decisions already made at more remote levels; and (4) that increasingly, students must become both data-sources and more intimately involved in determining their own goals and programs.

THE TECHNICAL/SOCIAL IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

There is no question that ideological program development conceived quite apart from political processes affects the programs experienced by students, whether in public, private or so-called free schools. Curriculum packages get adopted through the political process and, in some form or adaptation, are used. Societal controlling agencies determine whether certain subjects or topics are to

be considered at all--and frequently succeed in keeping some out. Nonetheless, in schools as now conducted, whatever finds its way through the political structure ultimately is subjected to the value orientation of a program gatekeeper, the teacher.

In the final analysis, the teacher, more in a democratic society than in a totalitarian one, determines many of the alternatives from which students actually choose, subtle nuances supplied by the teacher frequently favoring one over another and determining the rewards and risks for the student in making choices.

Nonetheless, this in no way detracts from the importance of rational processes of ideological program development through which alternative ends and means are posed and justified in pure forms, so to speak, quite apart from conventional wisdom, political processes, the state of instructional technology, and the interests of individual teachers. Nor does the significance of teachers' roles detract from the significance of political processes through which one set of program possibilities gains precedence over another. What occurs in both ideological and political processes constitutes data sources which in large measure determine the teacher's degree of freedom and the alternatives from which he or she chooses.

The fact that teachers are the final arbiters, however, suggests why so many curriculum reformers in the ideological realm find tantalizing the idea of "teacher proof" materials or non-human teachers such as computers once they make a foray or two into the political realm or seek to tamper with the social realities of schools and classrooms. It also suggests one of the reasons why some individuals and groups have sought to prescribe precise ground rules for teachers, textbooks for students, time allotments for students and the like. No wonder legislators

are reluctant to give up authority for prescribing instructional decisions.

Even though the stereotype of teachers in our society in literature, film, television and cartoon has been that of an impotent, ill-defined Ichabod Crane, the power of the teacher as final arbiter in the continuing struggle for placing one value or goal above another is widely recognized. Perhaps this is why, in part, progress toward creating any other stereotype is slow--it is safer to have impotent teachers! And, if there actually were not some relationship between the stereotype and the reality, perhaps teachers would dare, indeed, to build the social order.

However, the slogan that "it all depends on the teacher" is an empty, perhaps defeatist one. Their behavior is not nearly as technically precise as it could and should be, given significant recent progress in instructional technology. There has been at least an ideological revolution here, especially in the refinement of educational goals. But it is an oversimplification because, also, ideological processes tend to set the alternatives available and, indeed, to put a fence around choices; and political processes largely determine which, if any, ideological formulations will find their way to teachers, how much time they will allocate to them, what additional alternatives may be even considered, and the inducements to maintaining the status quo or to changing. Educating the individual teacher is no guarantee that the ends and means so acquired by teachers will become operative in the social structure. More often than not, the culture of schools and school systems shapes teachers rather thoroughly.[27] No, indeed, "it does not at all depend on the teacher." Consequently, changing educational goals and programs involves much more than the refinement of instructional logistics.

Teachers are not the final source of educational goals, even when working behind closed doors with control of most of the operants. Students are inordinately adept at frustrating goals held by teachers. Decline in the effectiveness of many secondary schools, for example, suggests a poor interface between today's youth culture and school programs. Many young people choose not to defer to this institution, regarding it as an unwelcome intrusion into their daily lives, and drop out while still in physical attendance.

To use children and youth genuinely as data-sources in goal-setting--long talked about in educational circles--would be a significant breakthrough in program planning. To create settings wherein students set and pursue their own educational goals would be a radical innovation.

CONCLUSION

Goals arise out of interests. Planners of educational programs seek to choose among human interests in specifying virtues such as citizenship, work, emotional and physical well-being and the like deemed most worthy of attainment. Statements of goals imply a gap between such virtues and existing conditions. Statements of goals cease to be puerile and become compelling when there are commitments to their attainment. The success of public schools depends heavily on large-scale agreement on and commitment to educational goals.

Educational planners seek to create rational programs in the sense that there are close logical or empirical relationships among hierarchies of goals chosen for the "best" possible reasons. This is exceedingly difficult because,

as yet, educational science has not drawn the necessary paths of relationships. We know little about the relationship between precise behavioral goals and the more remote ends usually stated for educational systems.

But, even if we possessed such knowledge, there remain staggering problems of implementing hierarchies of related goals in practice. Goals formulated from an ideological base still must find their way through the political structure. In the process, not only are initial goals reformulated but, frequently, they are shunted aside by other interests supported by other reasons. This occurs at every decision-making point: the societal decisions of legislators and school boards, the institutional decisions of administrators and teachers, and the instructional decisions of teachers. Whether or not included formally in the process, students manage to inject their interests, too. Even in totalitarian countries there is some slippage along the way from ideological goals to the existential goals of individual classrooms.

All of these processes are grist for theory and research. Likewise, all of these processes together constitute the practical domain of curriculum planners. At this point in time, both the theory to guide and the technology to expedite program development are, at best, weak. There is developing a useful technology of instruction but at the very time when there is increasing talk of decentralizing authority and responsibility, research suggests that school-wide program planning is virtually non-existent. Teachers and parents at the level of the local school are not at all clear on the kinds of decisions they should make and the kinds they should borrow ready-made. Who should make what decisions becomes an increasingly important question in seeking to allocate and identify authority and responsibility in program development.

If increased authority and responsibility for selecting educational goals is to be decentralized to local schools, school personnel and community representatives alike will need preparation for the tasks far beyond what they now have. Further, there will need to be time allocations extending far beyond those bits and pieces now used by teachers and parents in late afternoon or evening meetings. Just as education is too important to be left to the educators alone so is it too important to be left to those in the community having little else to do. There will need to be hard choices regarding what to leave appropriately for the educators and what to assign to a broad-based citizens group willing to take the time--including the time required to become reasonably knowledgeable about planning processes and educational alternatives. Likewise, the real consumers, the students, must play a role far beyond any assigned to them to date.

At the beginning level of discourse about educational goals for the local school, I have found it useful to engage educators, parents and students alike in seeking answers to three simple questions. First, what is it about our school that we like and wish to keep or strengthen? Second, what are things to be changed that could be improved in a matter of weeks? Third, what are those things to be improved that will require months or even years?

Such questions almost always lead groups into serious discussion of school functions and goals, to plans for action and to action itself. There is something much more vital and rewarding about this approach, as contrasted with the more ethereal task of formulating a set of educational goals. Goals, almost always,

will result from it, nonetheless, and will be accompanied, more often than not, by commitment to close the educational gap implied by them. There comes a time in educational program planning, as in other human affairs, to act on commitment rendered compelling by insight--even though not all the facts are in; for, in fact, they never will be.

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